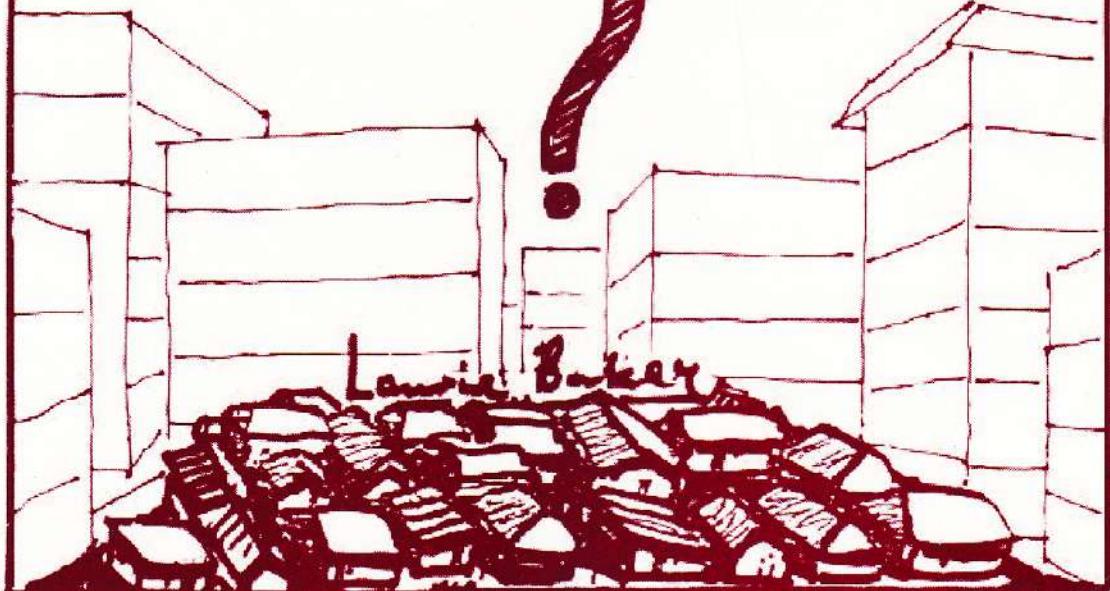
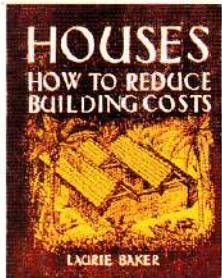


ARE SLUMS INEVITABLE

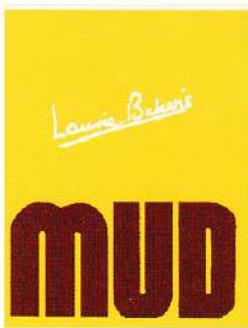


COSTFORD

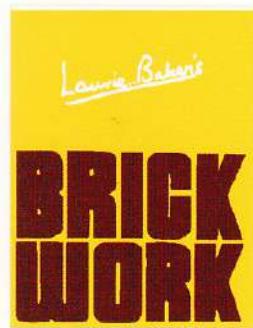
Other Titles in the Series



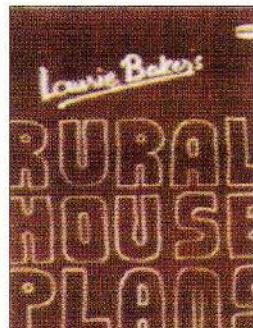
HOUSES
HOW TO REDUCE
BUILDING COSTS



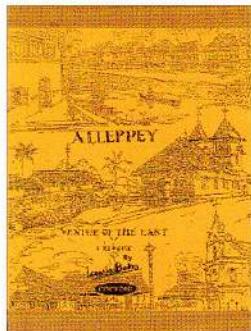
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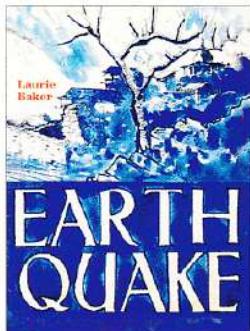
BRICK
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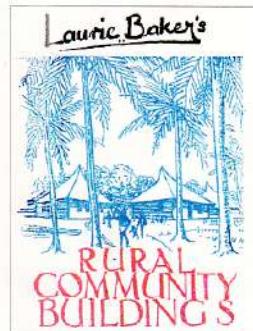
RURAL
HOUSE
PLANS



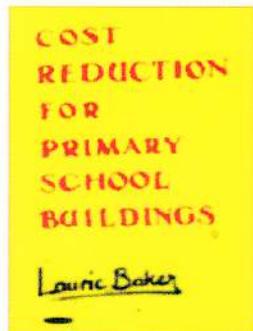
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OF THE EAST



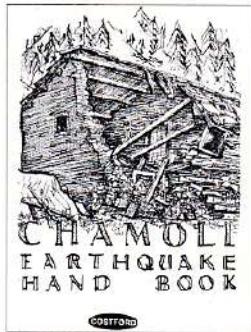
EARTH
QUAKE



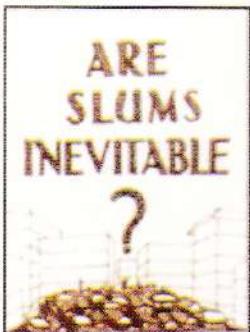
RURAL
COMMUNITY
BUILDINGS



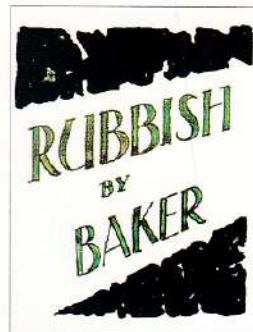
COST REDUCTION
FOR PRIMARY
SCHOOL
BUILDINGS



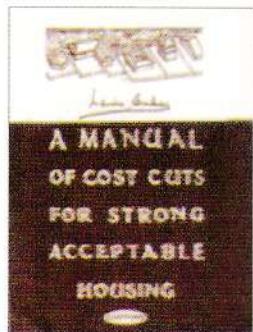
HOUSES
HOW TO REDUCE
BUILDING COSTS



ARE
SLUMS
INEVITABLE



RUBBISH
BY
BAKER



A MANUAL OF COST CUTS
FOR STRONG
ACCEPTABLE
HOUSING

COSTFORD

Centre of Science and Technology For Rural Development

Ayyanhole, Thrissur, Kerala, India, PIN-680 003

Phone: 91-487-2365 988, 2366 388.

Fax: 91-487-2366 388

Laurie Baker's
ARE
SLUMS
INNEVITABLE



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English

ARE SLUMS INEVITABLE ?

Laurie Baker

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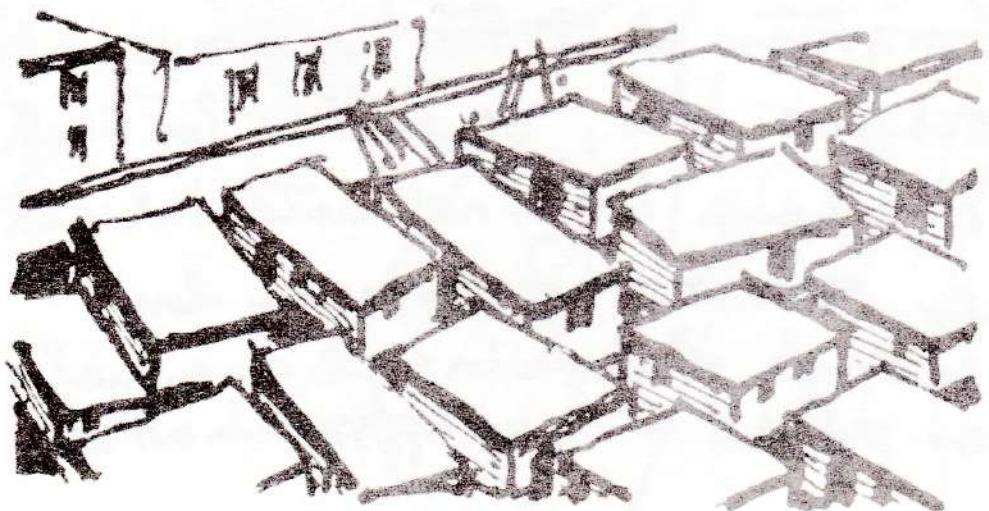
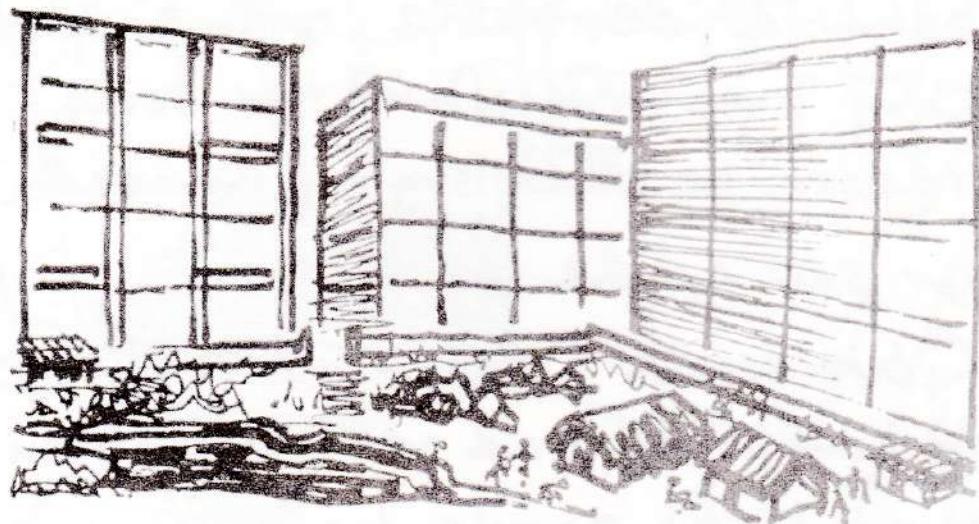
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SLUMS
ARE A **SHAME**
AND A **DISGRACE**
NOT TO THOSE WHO HAVE
TO LIVE IN ONE
BUT TO US -
PLANNERS, ARCHITECTS,
BUILDERS & CONTRACTORS;
OUR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.
AND THOSE IN AUTHORITY, AND
ALL OF US WHO PASS BY
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE
ROAD & PRETEND THAT A
SLUM IS NONE OF OUR BUSINESS.

A SLUM SHOULD NOT
JUST BE PATCHED UP, OR
HIDDEN BEHIND BIG HIGH
POSTERS SO THAT VISITERS &
PASSERS-BY CANT SEE IT.

A SLUM & ITS PEOPLE
MUST NOT just be pushed
to another waste place to
become ANOTHER NEW
SLUM !

A SLUM MUST NOT
be 'converted' into a cement
block replica, identical in
planning & services to the
old original slum.



A SLUM is probably where it now is because there was 'waste', 'difficult', 'dirty', 'unusable' patch of land which was

a tucked away between and behind 'desirable', 'prime' good city property which, for some reason or other, is lying unused.

b set aside for some Government Scheme but those in authority had retired, or been moved, & people had forgotten that the 'improvement' scheme was, or money for such a scheme had not materialised.

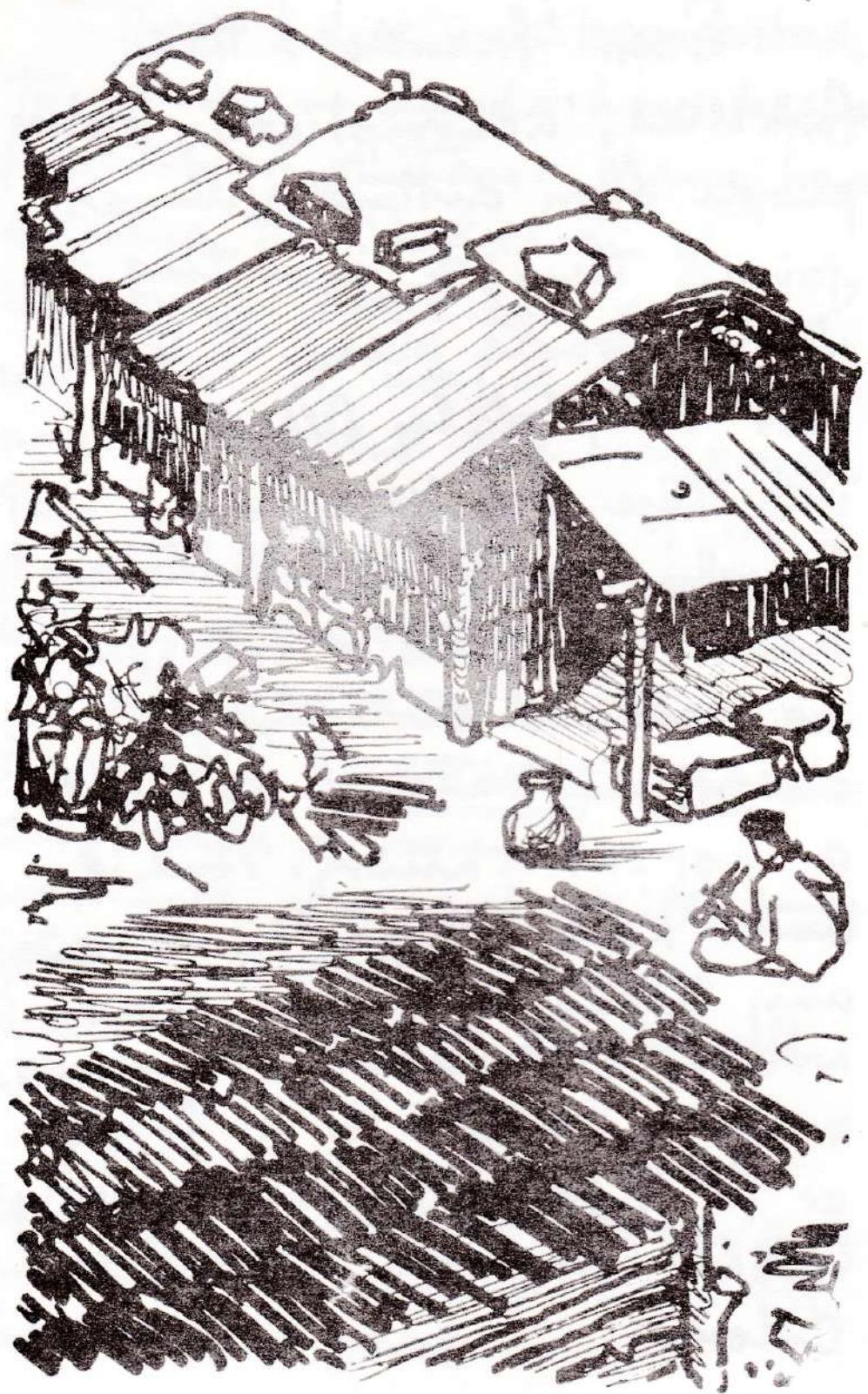
c covered or crossed by sewage & drainage channels & ponds & is unapproachable.



Homeless, Jobless
people had moved in and
built for themselves shacks
and huts from waste
materials — mostly tin sheets,
broken asbestos sheets,
rotten poles & branches,
even just sacks & boxes &
of course, all manner of
plastic bags & containers.

Now they were close to
casual employment & new
to busy business people who
needed others to do their
dirty work for them.

They could also be close
to each other for company and
protection.



Soon 'friends' & their families, 'accomplices', jobless people from distant villages, joined them, & in no time, the whole 'waste piece of land' got completely filled up with these shacks & huts. Barely room to walk between them. No paths or open spaces; no water & certainly no drinking water! no lights & no sanitation. And if there had originally been any trees or bushes these would have been torn down & used, either for 'building' or for fire wood. Very quickly GREEN had become a forgotten colour.

They have not been asked to leave — people have become frightened of them. Many have become the "helpers" of Union & Political people who find it useful to have nearby available manpower. This is only one side of the people who have had no option but to settle & live in a slum.

Many of them become desirable EXPERTS — valuable, desirable & necessary workers who get skilled at jobs that most people dislike doing or simply will not do.

And so our Slum friends become expert scavengers, & are often valuable, desirable fellow citizens.

They not only clean and clear away our waste & rubbish.

They EXPERTLY SORT it out into many different categories of materials that can be recycled.

Paper can be made into bags & containers, or it can be recycled into 'new', fashionable, beautiful 'hand made' paper & card for Birthday, Christmas, Wedding & Greeting cards.

There are many waste metals (Toothpaste & ointment tubes) which can also be recycled.

Leather & Cloth & plastics also fetch a price. Glass can be melted down & used again by glass manufacturers.

Our Slum dwellers do all this (as many other) sort of work for which they get enough money to live on —

AND it is all done to OUR advantage & use.

We accuse them, unjustly, of being Criminals and parasites, & they have to put up with being called such words as 'Scum', 'Worthless', 'parasites' etc. Their children don't go to school. They get taunted & laughed at by "respectable" children & altho it is now fashionable to decry child labour, they inevitably help their parents in this loathsome & scavenging occupation.

After doing all this for the benefit of the 'employed' 'well-off', 'respectable' community, surely we should do something to provide them with not only facilities for them to do this recycling work etc, but also homes, with ordinary "essential services" like water, light, education & health, & workshops in which they can be trained & do all this sorting & recycling in hygienic conditions.

In other words - should we not **DESTROY** our garbage, but **RE-CYCLE** them?

Most of us live in pukka houses or flats which have a back yard, or a garden, or a balcony or flat roof for 'out-door' occupations AND enjoyment - Clothes drying - children playing - keeping pets & even animals & birds for food & eggs & milk etc. Many also grow plants - flowers, vegetables, colourful shrubs & so on.

Do our slum-dwelling
fellow human beings have
any of these facilities &
enjoyments?

The answer is, mainly, a plain, big, **NO**, & one of the ways in which we can honourably "go into the next millennium" is for **US** to DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

A crowded slum is a hazard and a threat, not only to those who live in it but to the health of the whole neighbourhood.

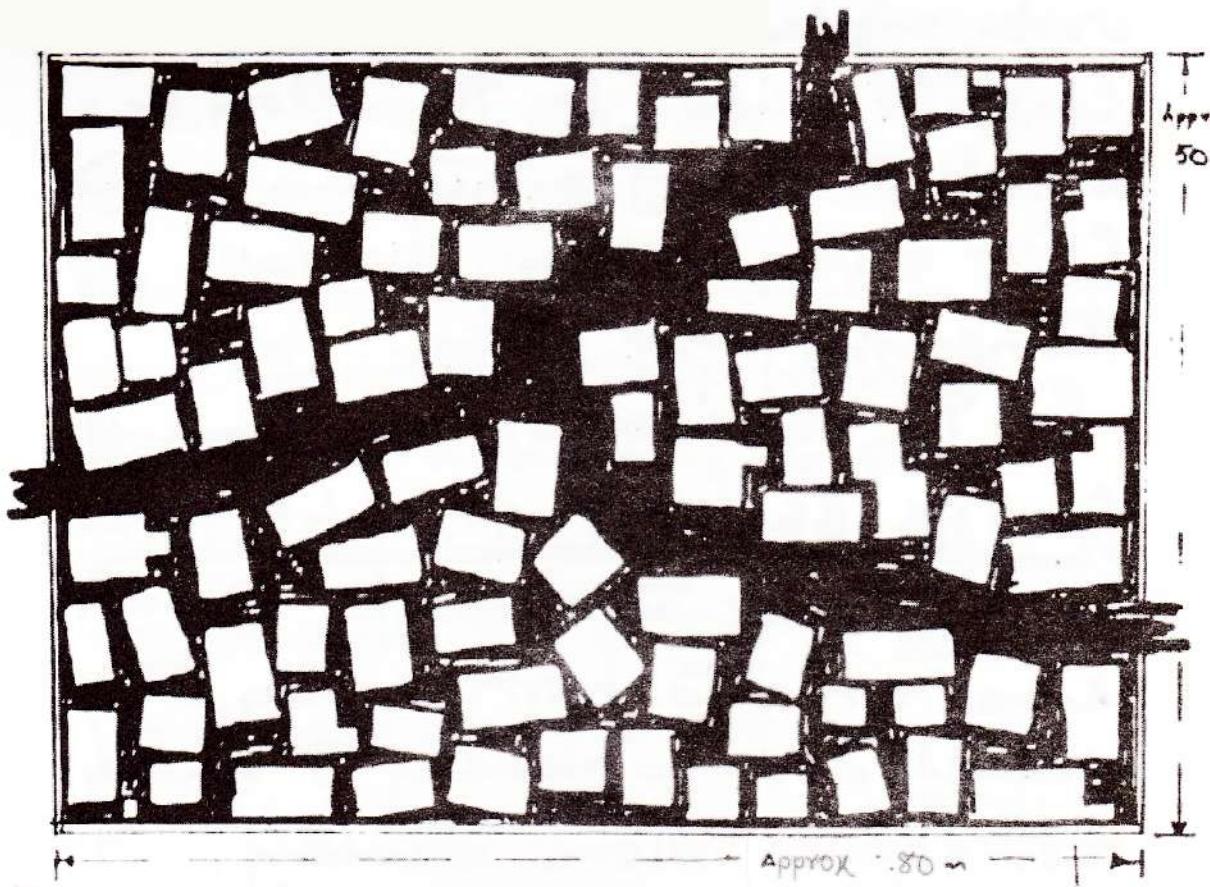
The main reason for clearing the site & rebuilding the same number of homes, but in well constructed 3 or 4 tiered blocks (as illustrated) is not only to provide proper housing but also to give an open space within a crowded city area to act as "lungs" to afford all the citizens to breathe — free from Toxic fumes from traffic etc.

For those who will live in the newly built houses there will not be some open land where they can

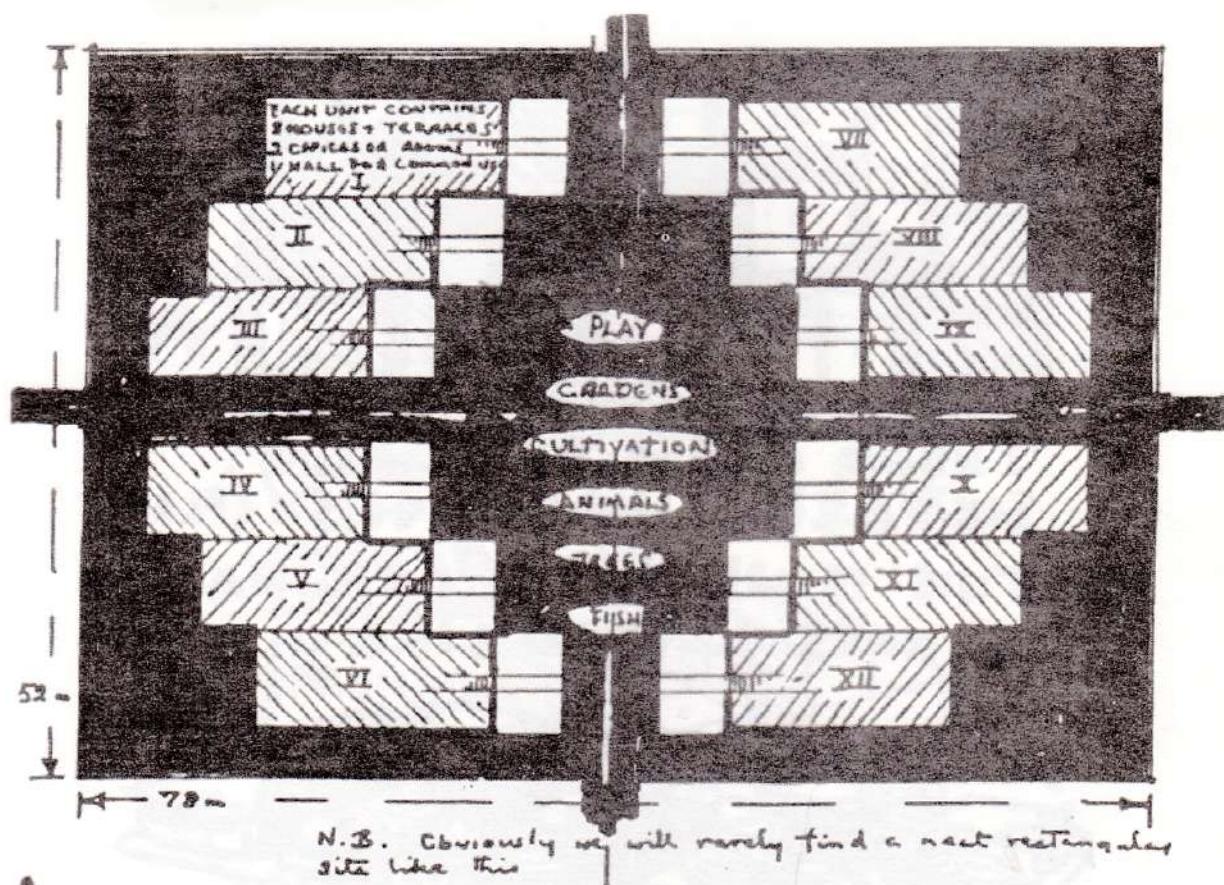
work & play. They can keep cows for milk (for themselves & to sell to others) & they can grow fruit & vegetables, also for themselves & for others.

The retrieved open land is for THE BENEFIT OF ALL — & is NOT for the wealthy to build even greater homes than those pulled down — merely to make themselves more wealthy.

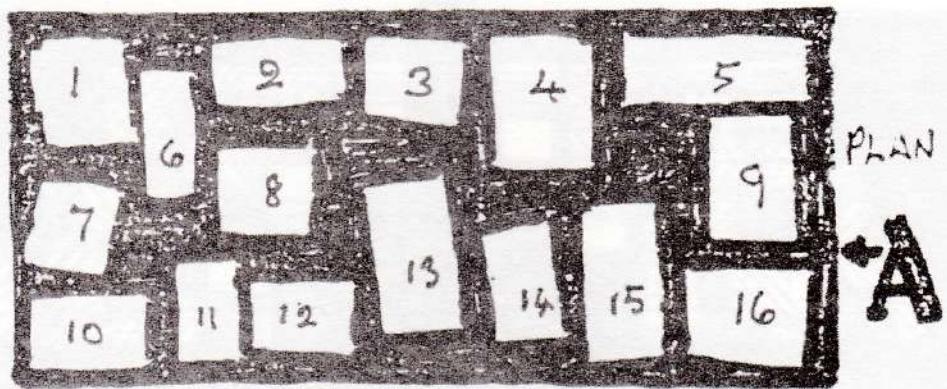




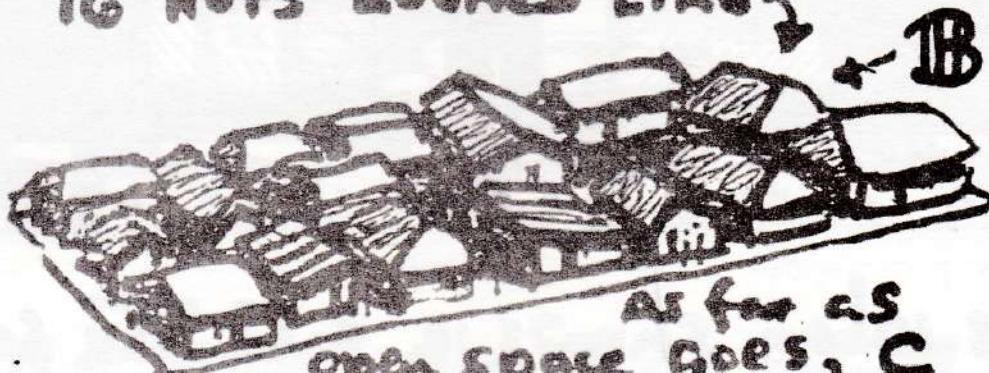
This is a rough plan of an actual slum. There were three "colonies", together having a total of about 100 shacks. The area covered was nearly one acre (about 80m x 50 m).



This plan shows a site the same area (about 1 acre) as the actual slum (opposite). There are the same number of houses (stepped blocks) plus extra rooms & halls AND a lot of public open space.

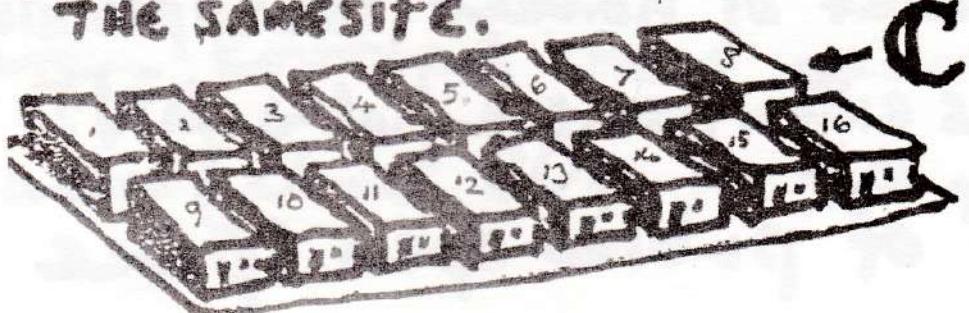


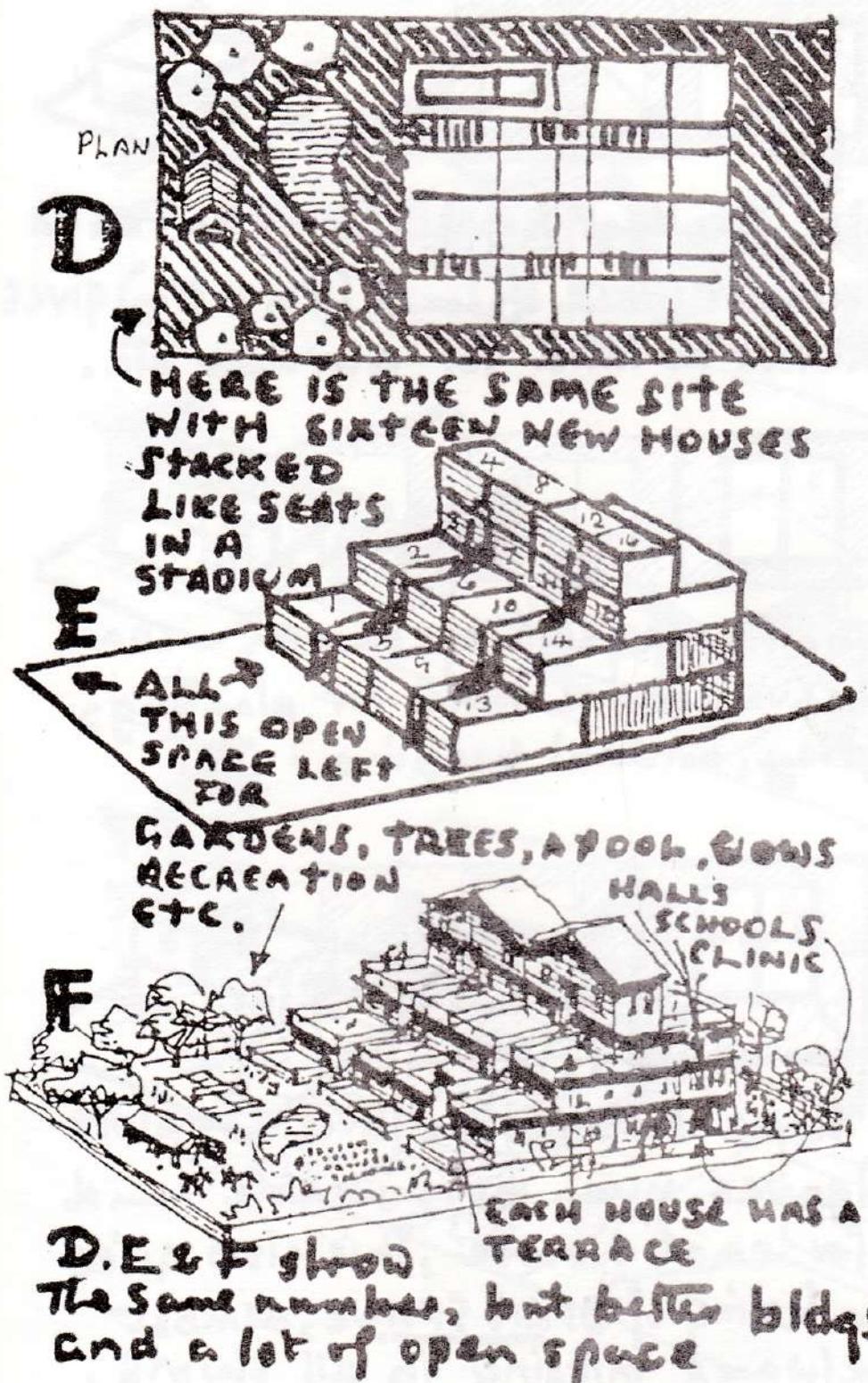
THESE ARE A TYPICAL
SIXTEEN SLUM SHACKS (PLAN)
THIS IS WHAT THE ORIGINAL
16 HUTS LOOKED LIKE →

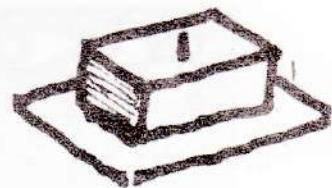
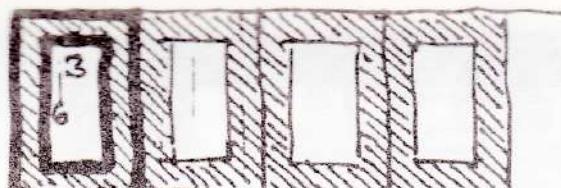


As far as
open space goes, C
is no better than the original

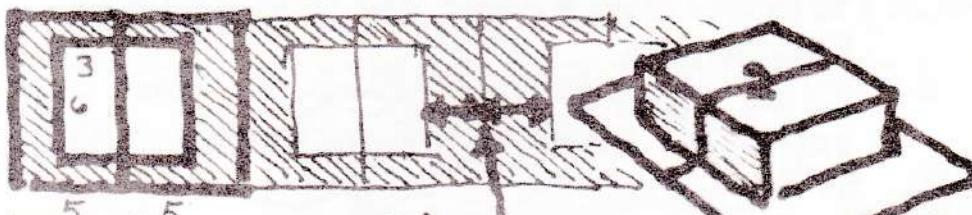
GOVT. STYLE REPLACEMENT,
HERE THEY ARE REPLACED
BY SIXTEEN NEW HOUSES ON
THE SAME SITE.



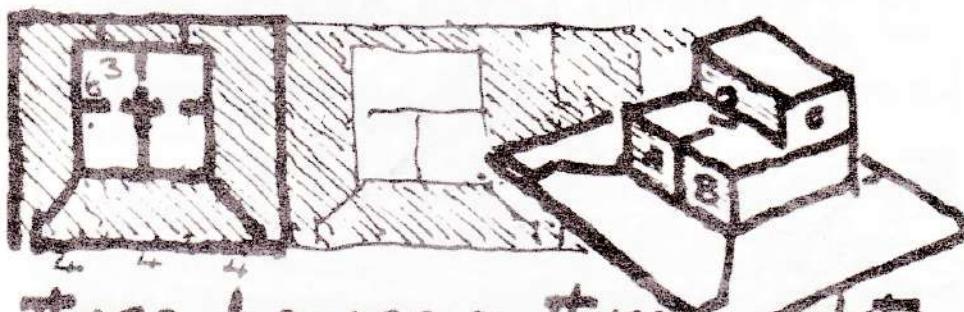




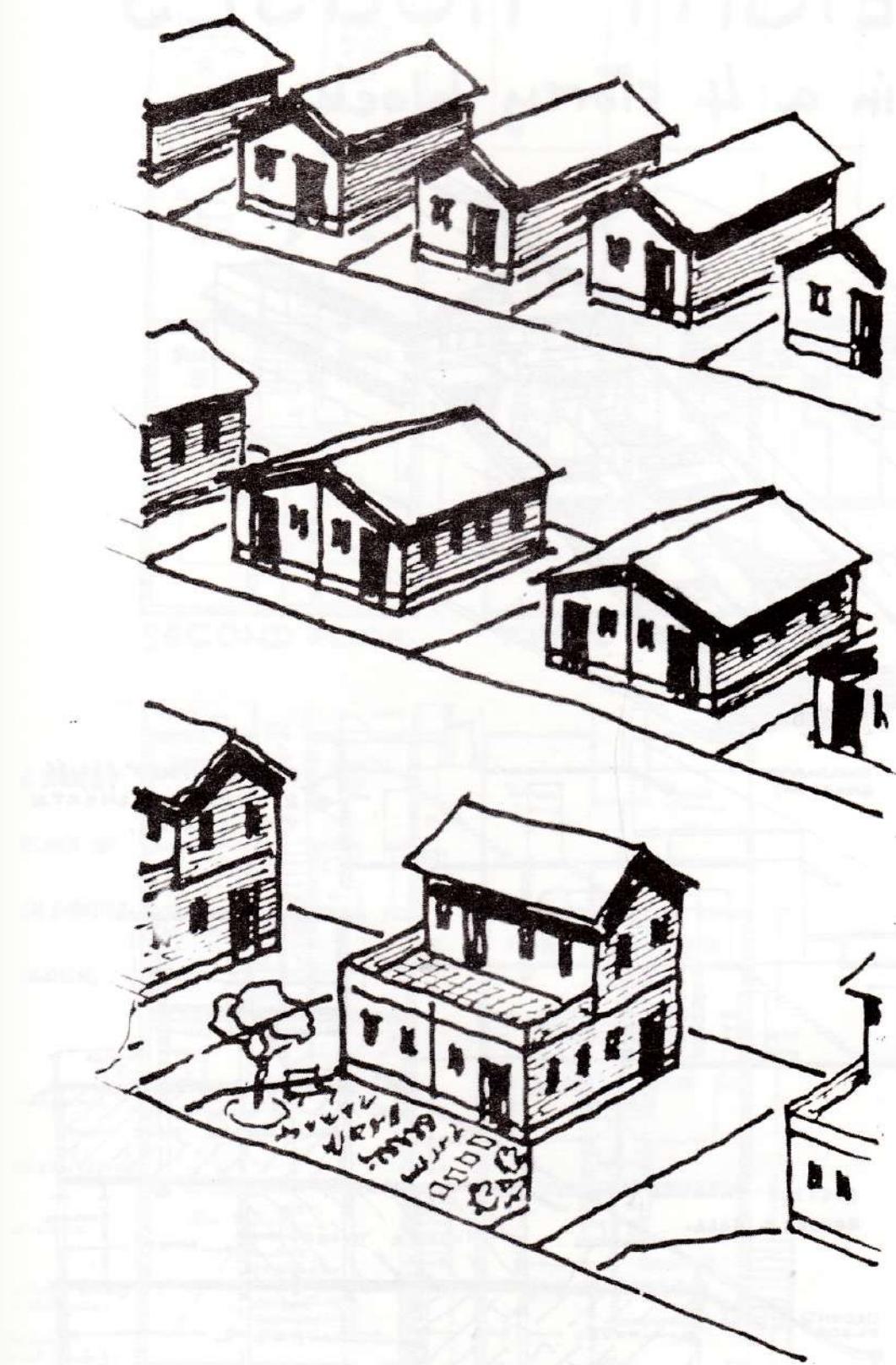
the smallest house ($6m \times 3m$) on the smallest piece of land ($8m \times 5m$) gives almost no land for garden etc.



Two houses with a common wall leaves more land for planting, play, animal keeping etc.

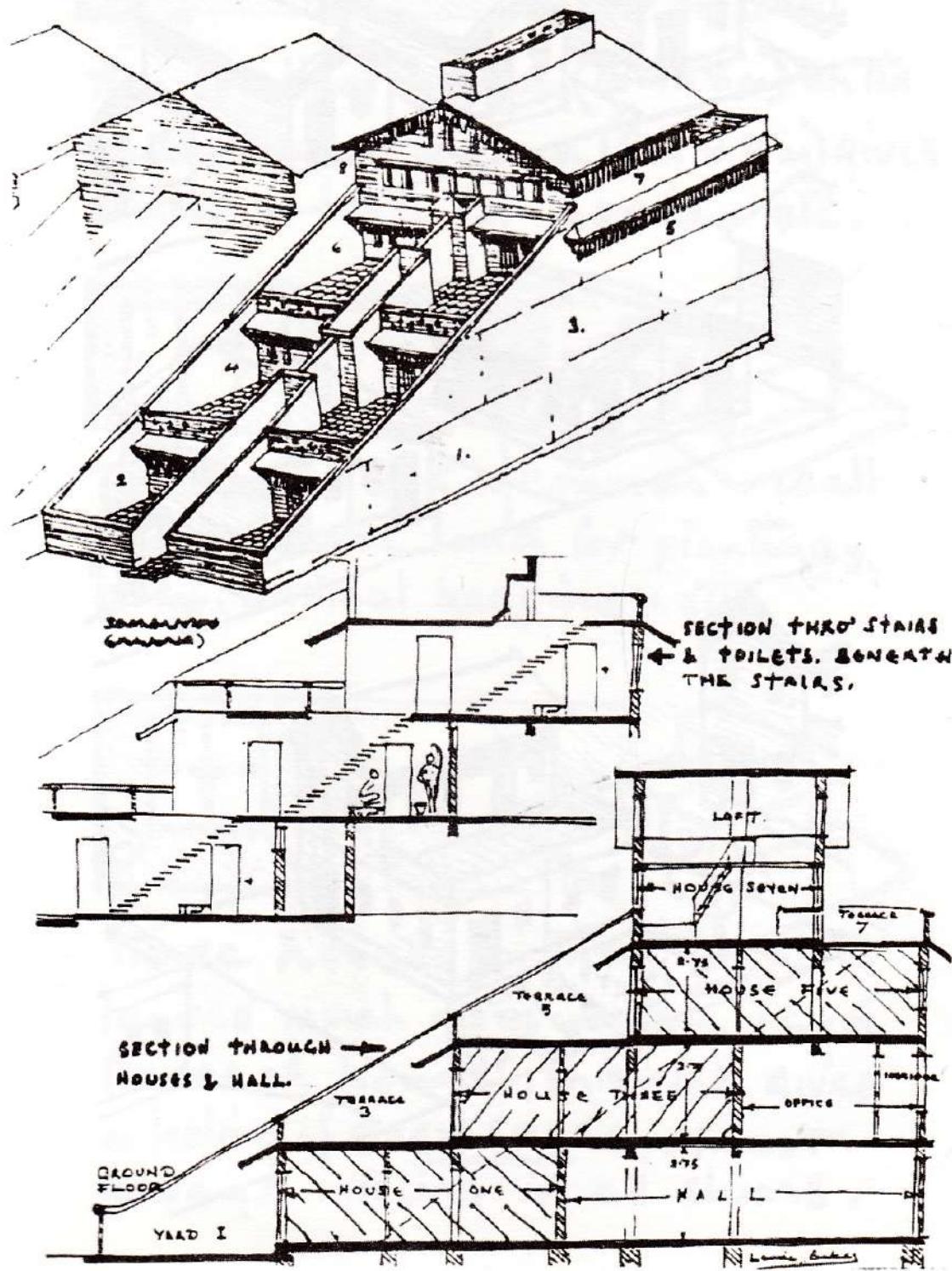


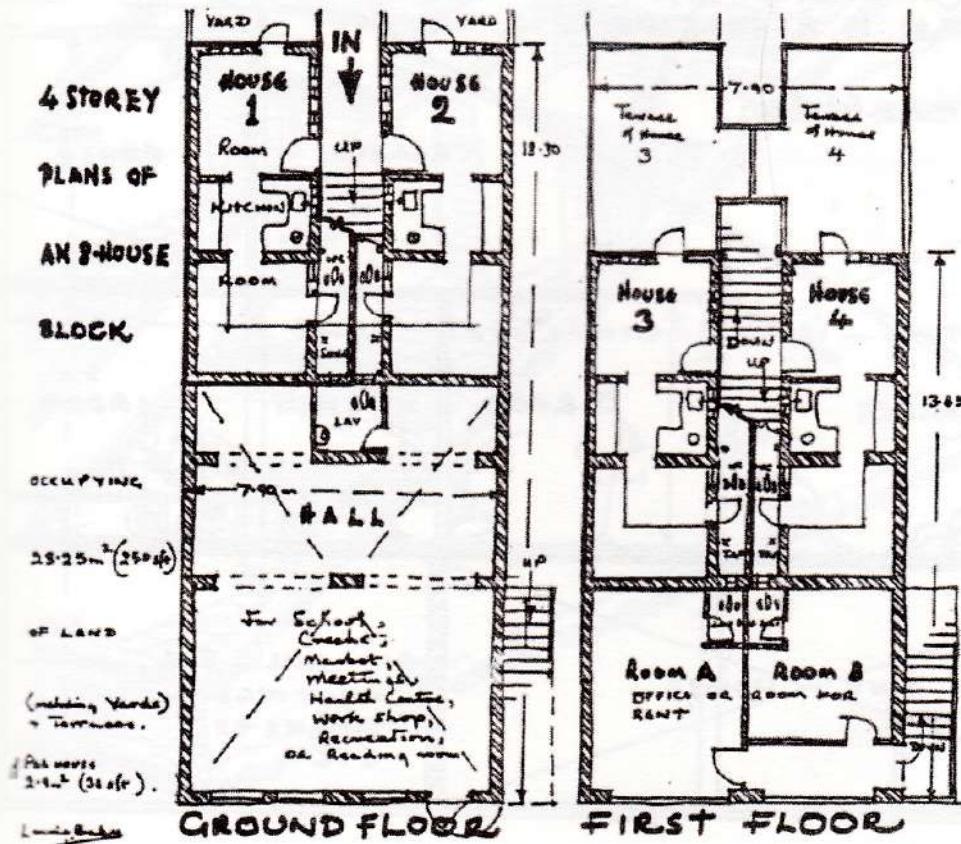
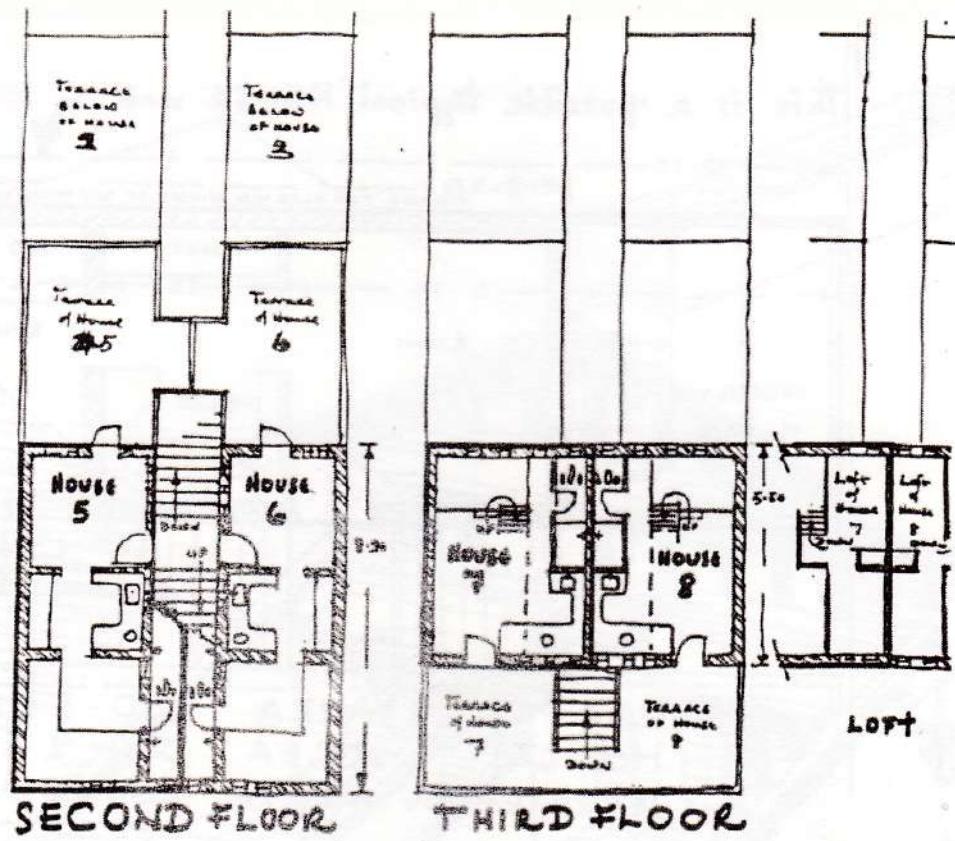
Three houses on three plots leaves much more useable land for each house. This also gives a feeling of OPEN SPACE, almost always missing in all slums.



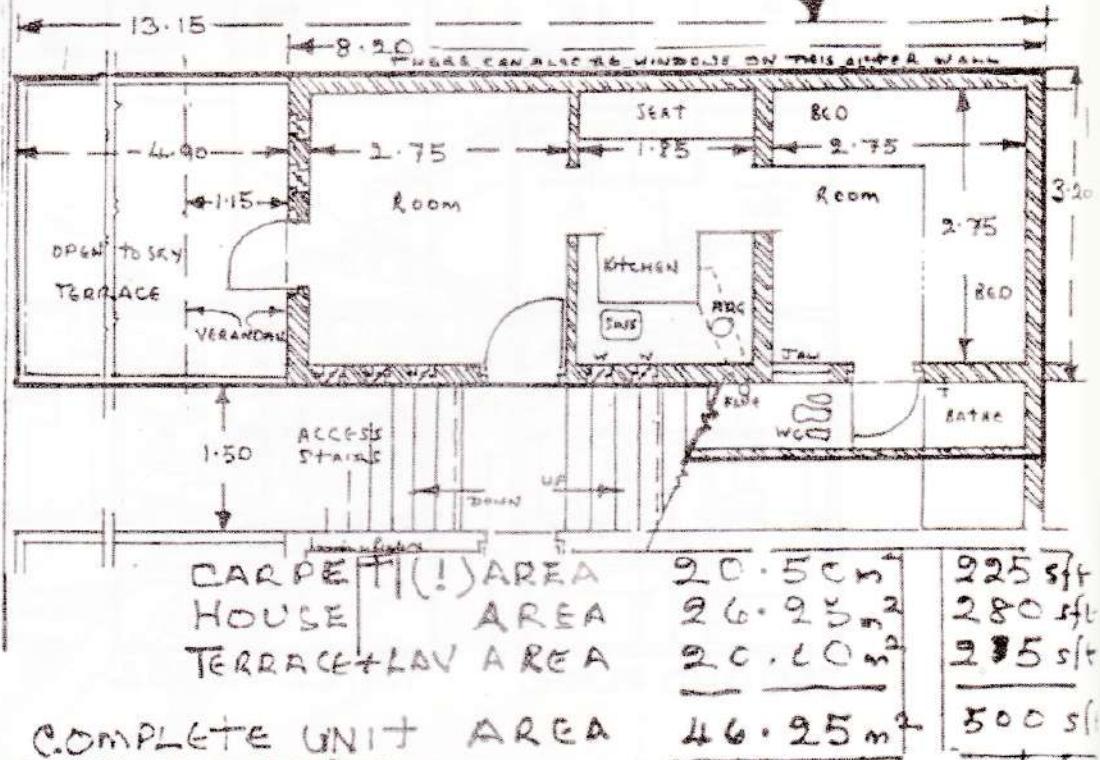
EIGHT HOUSES

in a 4 storey block.

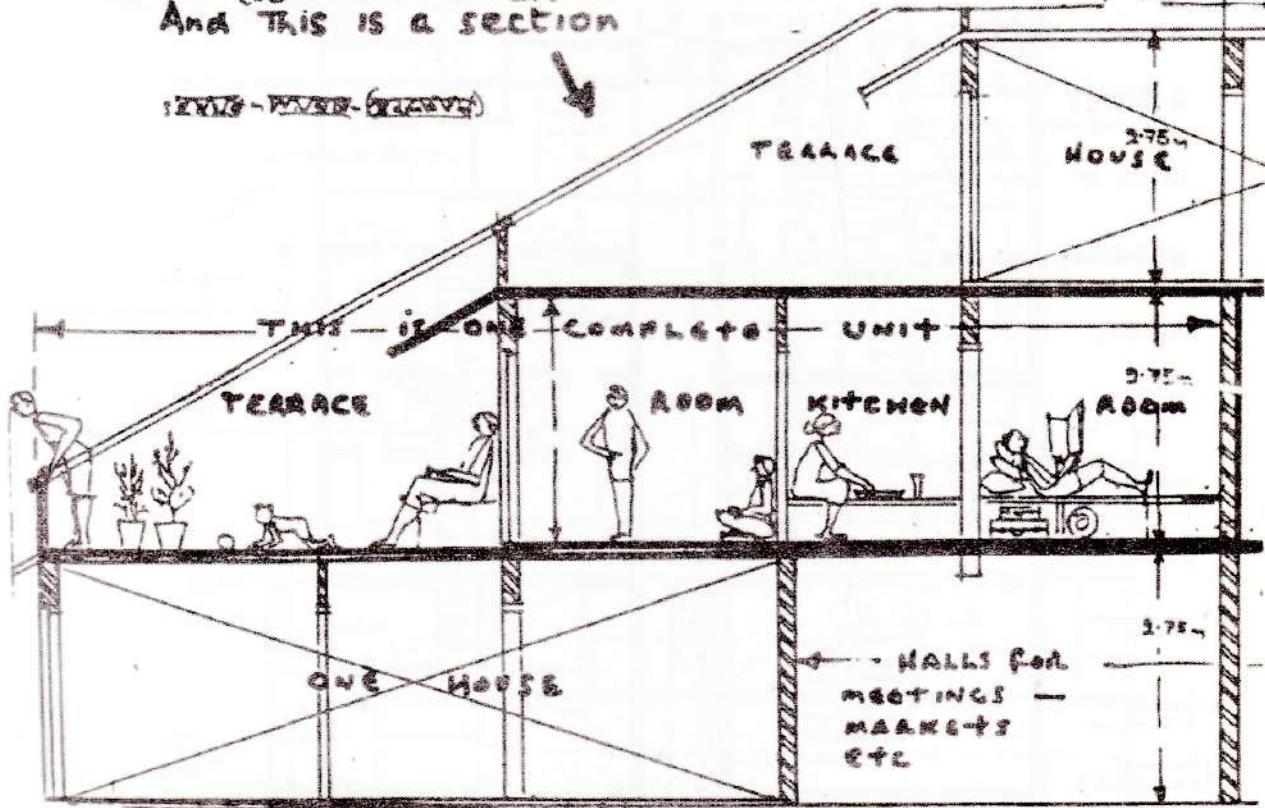


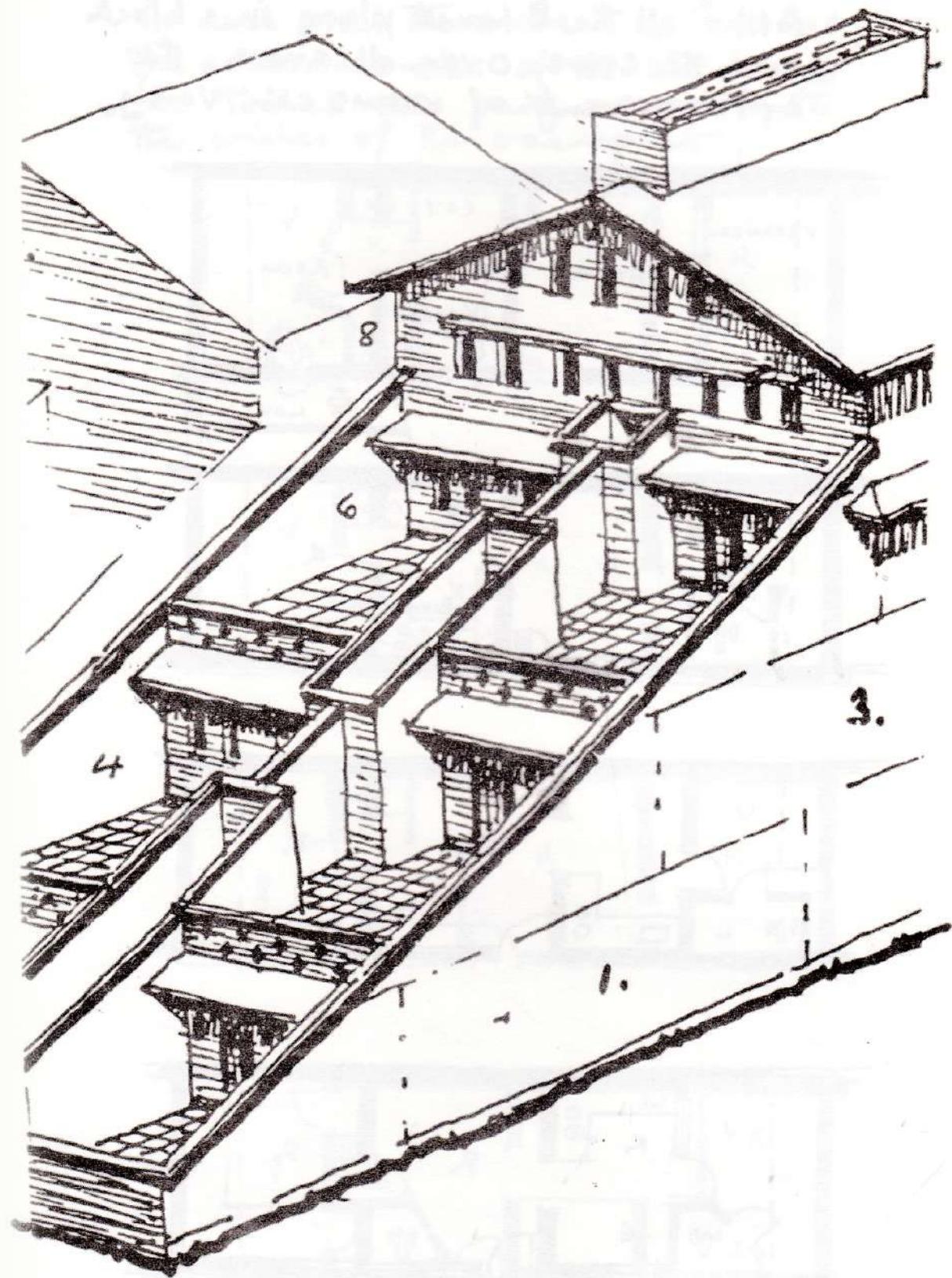


This is a possible typical HOUSE unit  PLAN

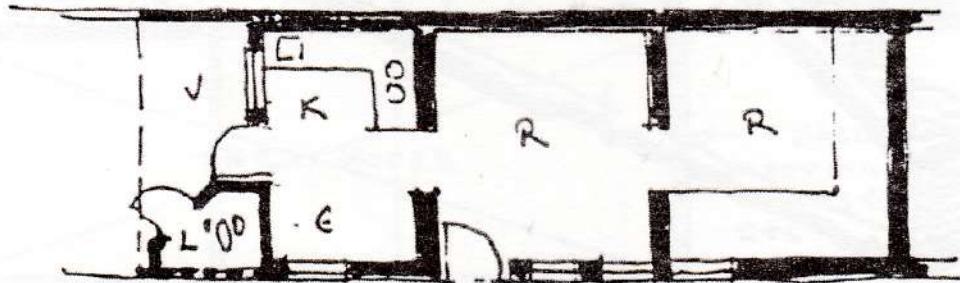
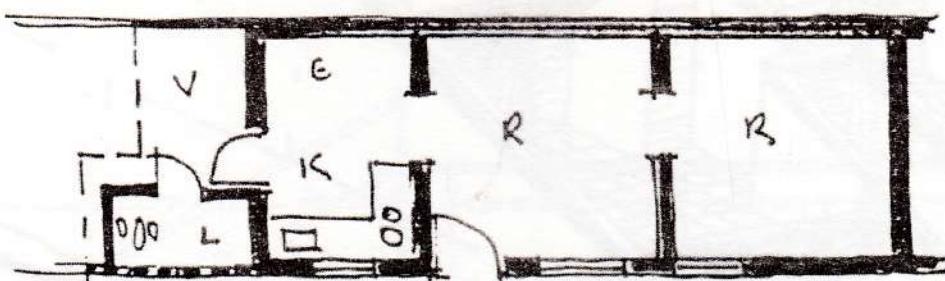
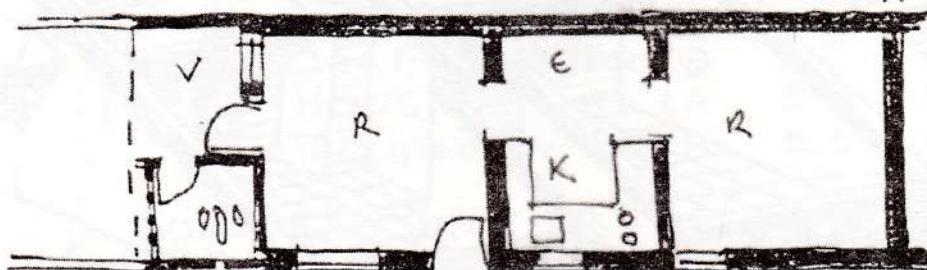
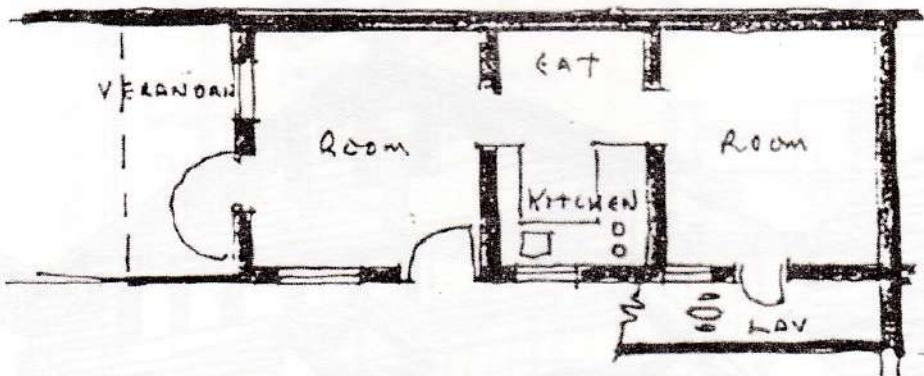


COMPLETE UNIT AREA
And THIS IS A SECTION

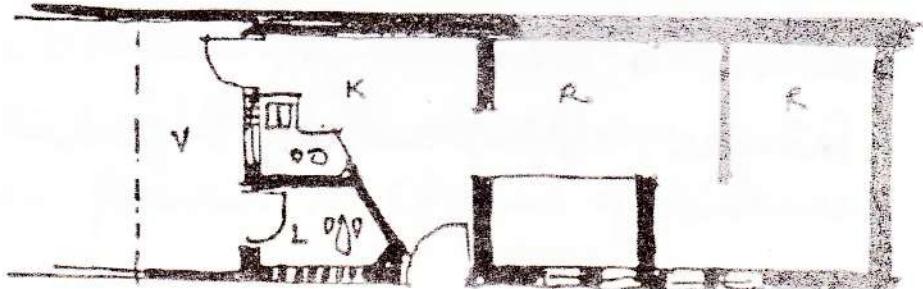
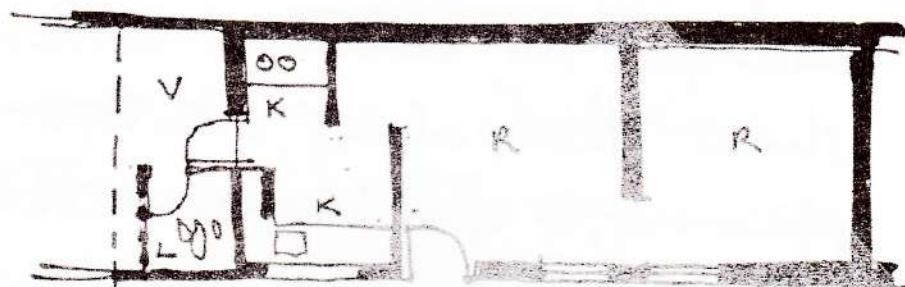
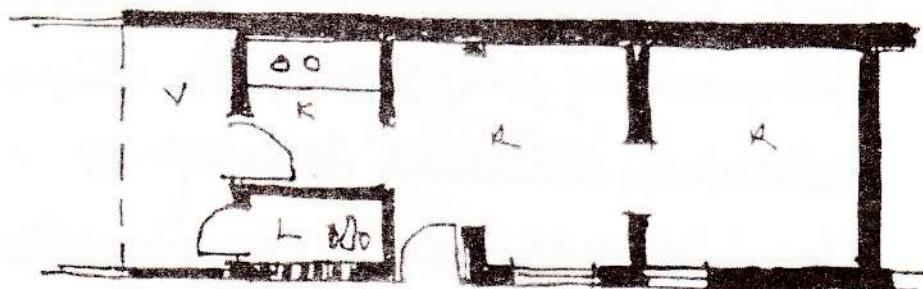
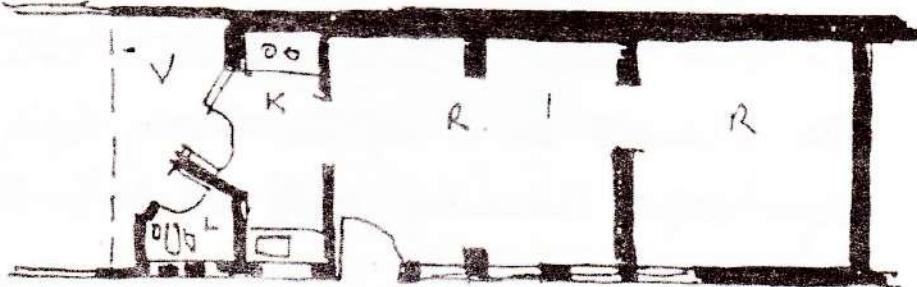




Altho' all the B house plans in a block are the same over-all area, the arrangement of rooms can vary.



In each plan there are 2 main rooms
The position & size of the kitchen &
the Toilet can vary according to
the wishes of the occupant.



Slums naturally vary in size.

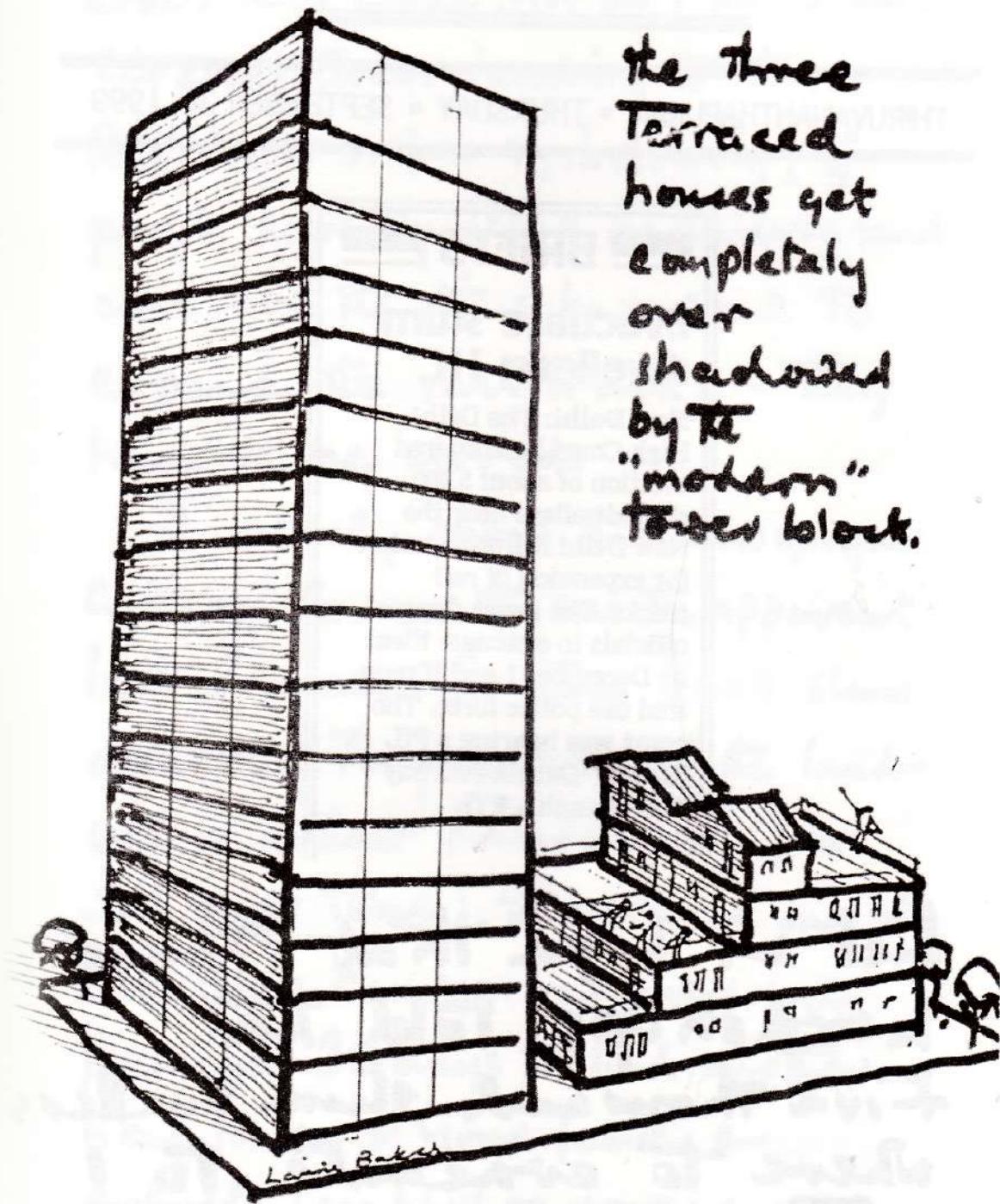
In our huge metropolitan cities the slums are often very big & one can easily get lost in them.

In smaller towns the slums are correspondingly smaller.

However, in view of the stigma that has attached itself to slum dwellers it is important, anyway until the country has changed its attitudes towards slums, that, along with the planning, to give more usable open space, & the conversion of ramshackle huts to proper durable buildings, some single, appropriately sited

Other buildings or rooms are necessary. We cannot expect, as one example, city schools to change over-night their attitude to ill-dressed & perhaps ill-managed school age children. There are many Voluntary Agencies who would be willing to run nurseries, 'crèches', preschool classes for very young children so that they will be ready to enter into the main-stream school at the appropriate age. Workshops & stores for all the recycling possibilities would solve a lot of problems. Similarly a small health centre would not only attend to the health of the dwellers but also prevent the spread of disease.

the sketch F
must not be
allowed to
become this! →
If it does,
we are merely
converting a
mud & tin
slum into a
concrete one.
We've made the
mistake of keeping
Nature out of
cities. Are we
foolish enough
to go on doing it?



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • THURSDAY • SEPTEMBER 30, 1999

BRIEFS

**Evacuate slum
dwellers: HC**

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has ordered eviction of about 5,000 slum dwellers near the New Delhi railway station for expansion of rail tracks. The court directed officials to evacuate them by December 1 and if required use police force. The court was hearing a PIL filed by 'Dainik Railway Yatri Sangh'. PTI

Let us hope that Their Lordships told the Five thousand slum dwellers where to evacuate to !

I of course do not know details about this case, nor do I know the circumstances leading to this High Court order & obviously, if people have squatted on Railway land and now the time has come to expand the rail tracks - they have to be moved.

I merely show this newspaper cutting for you to see the apparent lack of concern for these 5000 slum dwellers. They must be off the land - with or without Police force (?) in 30 days time! If you were one of these 5000, can you imagine your feelings? 30 days to find another home for you & your family & probably you have no money anyway.

Some of the sketch plans for recycled slum houses shown in these pages can easily include such 'extras' at very little extra cost.

It is worth pointing out now that the typical traditional house plans all over India nearly all consist, ~~not~~ of just a house — but a whole 'compound' — however small, ~~is~~ the 'habitat' of a family. The 'House' is often merely a sleeping place, & a bad winter shelter & a store! Cooking, Occupations, Play, Animals, Storage of fuel & fodder all take place in an enclosed compound.

Of course, I can almost
hear you saying "Fine! Fine!
Marvellous ideas! Why not
give them T.Vs & Maruti vans
while you're about it!"

But don't worry — I'm going
to go on making it known that
we have many millions of
homeless families. It is
possible, & we are at present
building small houses for between
Rs 20,000/- & Rs 35,000/- (I'm well
aware that Construction, Labour &
materials costs vary enormously
all over the country.) The Head
of our present Government
recently gave a list of the
Country's Priority needs.

His first priority was for a six lane highway to be built from Kashmar to KanyaKemari! I cant honestly say that I can hardly wait for the great day when I can drive - anyway on ONE lane, from my home in Trivandrum all the way to Kozhikode.

Any way - The following pages, with tentative plans and illustrations are intended to show that all of this glass-recycling idea is not just an airy-fairy idealist utopia, but that there is no good reason why we should not start actually trying to DO something practical about it.

there ARE existing Government (or other) departments who have Plans, Personnel & Power to deal with such vast problems as controlled water supply, electricity, sanitation, solar & bio gas energy, access paths & roads, education & health services, banking & insurance, animal & poultry & fish breeding, Social forestry, agriculture & horticulture, small scale industries and, of course buildings. There will be problems & inconveniences & existing vested interests — but as a Nation we **MUST OVERCOME** & the time to start overcoming is **NOW !**

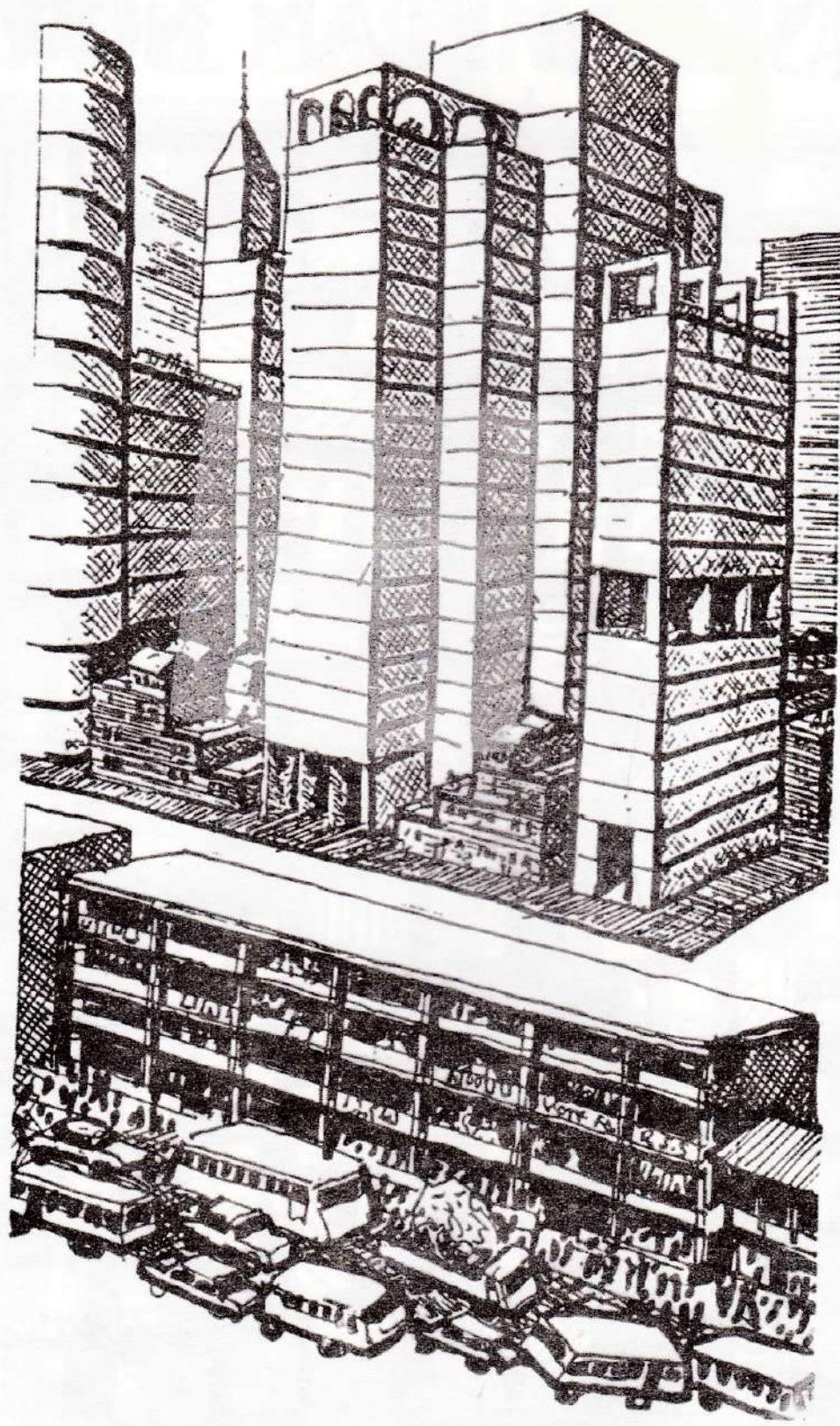
The 'Modern' Multi Storied Luxury Apartments + offices may have their attractions for the Rich People of this world, but both in their construction + in their daily use they use a disproportionate amount of power (fuel) + of Scarce materials.

They also pose enormous threats such as Sanitation + "Natural Hazards" (such as earthquakes) etc.

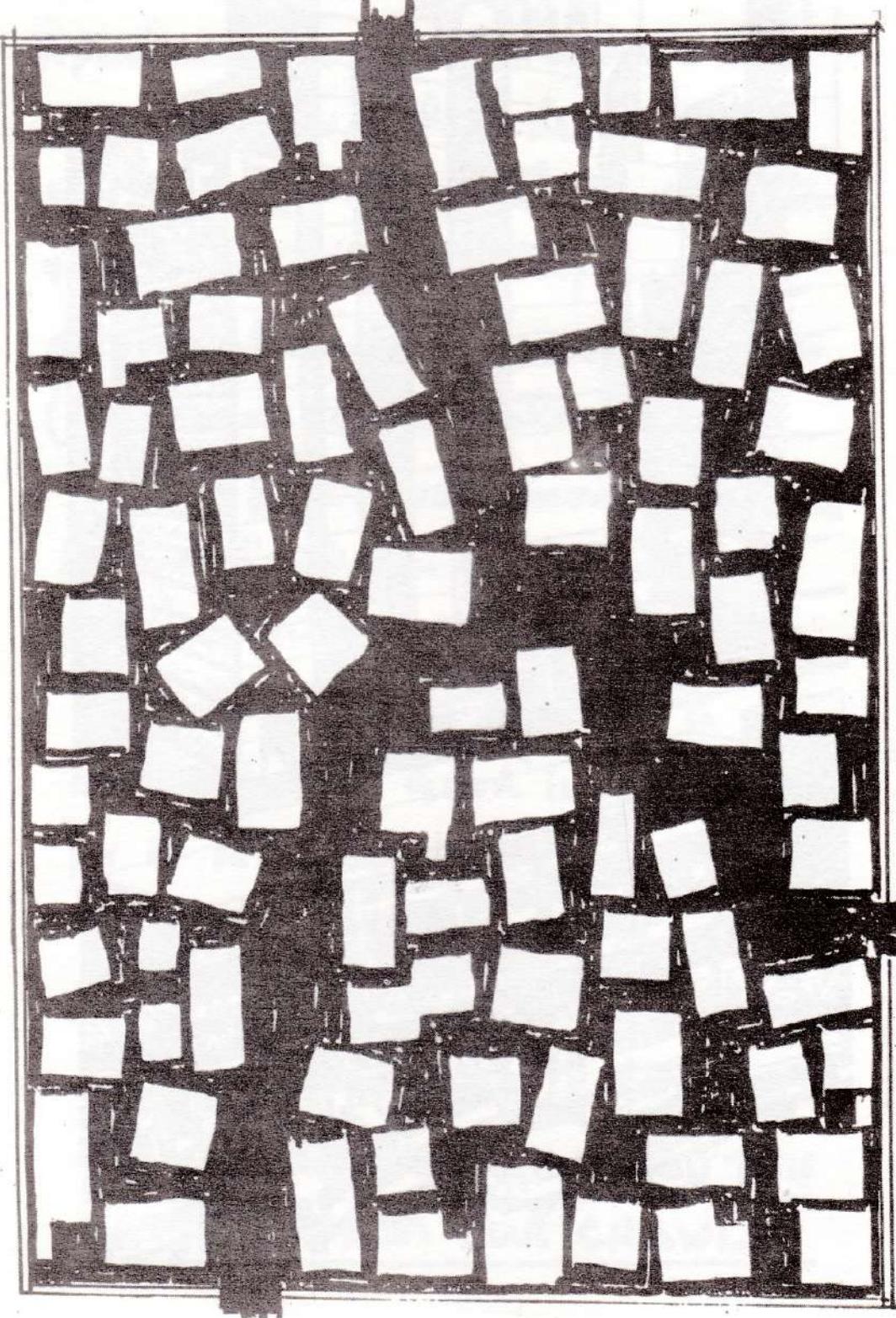
Unfortunately they are a wonderful + 'good' investment for the Rich People.

Vertical Tenements are neither practical (water, sanitation, access etc) nor acceptable to the users.

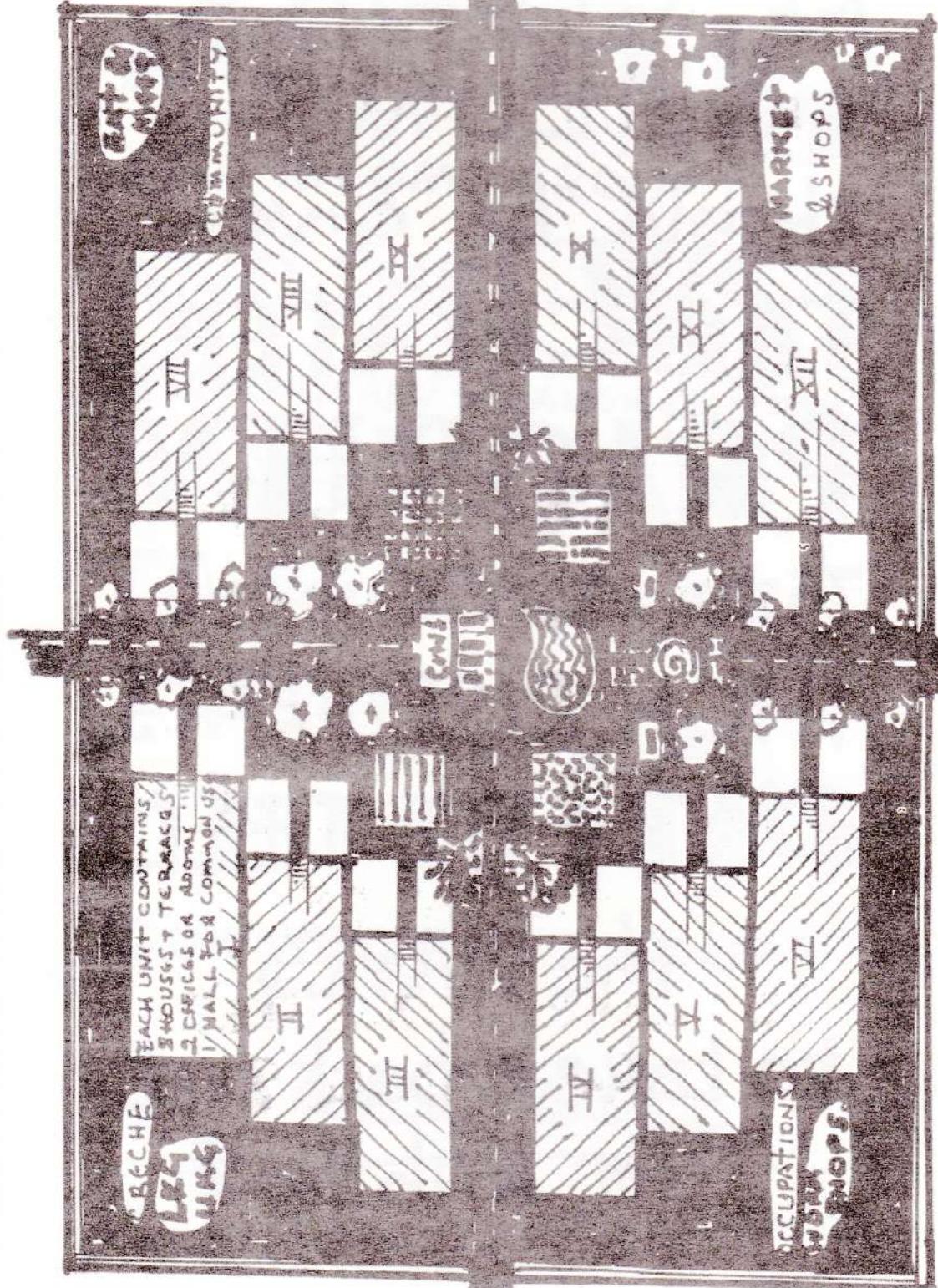
WE SHOULD HAVE LEARNED THIS LESSON FROM OUR CHAWLS!



A SLIM PLAN NOW



SAME SLUM NEXT YEAR



RE-CYCLING
our SLUMS
should be given
FAR-GREATER
PRIORITY
than more & more
HIGH RISE FLATS.
DARE WE TELL
the HAVES
to take a back seat
for a while?

AND LET THE **NING'S**
(NO INCOME GROUP)
AND THE **EW'S'S**
(ECONOMICALLY WEAKER SECTION)
HAVE A CHANCE
TO BECOME AT
LEAST

LIG'S
(LOW INCOME GROUP)

Lewis Baker

SLUMS
ARE A **SHAME**
AND A **DISGRACE**
NOT TO THOSE WHO HAVE
TO LIVE IN ONE
BUT TO US -
PLANNERS, ARCHITECTS,
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OUR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.
AND THOSE IN AUTHORITY, AND
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ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE
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SLUM IS NONE OF OUR BUSINESS.

COSTFORD

The Centre of Science and Technology for Rural Development known by its acronym COSTFORD was established in 1985 to develop, demonstrate and disseminate alternative technologies that will ultimately change the social, economic and political positions of the poor, deprived and marginalized sections of society. The initial thrust area of the activities of COSTFORD was the diffusion of cost and energy effective alternatives to building technology. In consideration of the commendable work done by COSTFORD, the Government of Kerala has recognized it as an accredited agency to execute construction works using alternative technologies for all Government Departments and Agencies. Hundreds of architects and engineers trained by COSTFORD in Baker philosophy have become the change agents in the construction sector. It also gives special emphasis to the needs of women in society through training, organization and employment generation schemes.

COSTFORD extends consultancy services to Panchayati Raj Institutes for local economic development, decentralized planning and governance.

Besides, COSTFORD has also been interacting with students from various disciplines and has created a library and research centre on subjects that are relevant from the point of people-centred development. Annual memorial lectures by eminent public personalities and intellectuals are organised to commemorate the contributions of C. Achutha Menon, K.N. Raj and Laurie Baker. Special lectures and classes are also conducted on themes of topical interest.

COSTFORD has constructed a large number of buildings including houses for government and non-government institutions and families. In its quest to carry on the legacy of Laurie Baker, it has also been experimenting with alternative cost effective but environmentally-friendly materials such as bamboo, mud and wood. It has won several prizes and awards for its construction activities. More details can be accessed from its website: www.costford.org

COSTFORD has published 12 books authored by Laurie Baker and 30 books authored by others. A Malayalam quarterly "Puthuvazhi" is being published under its initiative to promote and popularize alternative perspectives on development, environment, gender, social oppression and culture.

LBC for Habitat Studies

The Laurie Baker Centre for Habitat Studies was established in 2009 to carry on the legacy of Laurie Baker. Located 12 kms from Trivandrum city in a lush campus of around 4 acres in the Vilappilsala Panchayat, it conducts training, research and publication activities. More details can be accessed from its website: www.lauriebakercentre.org

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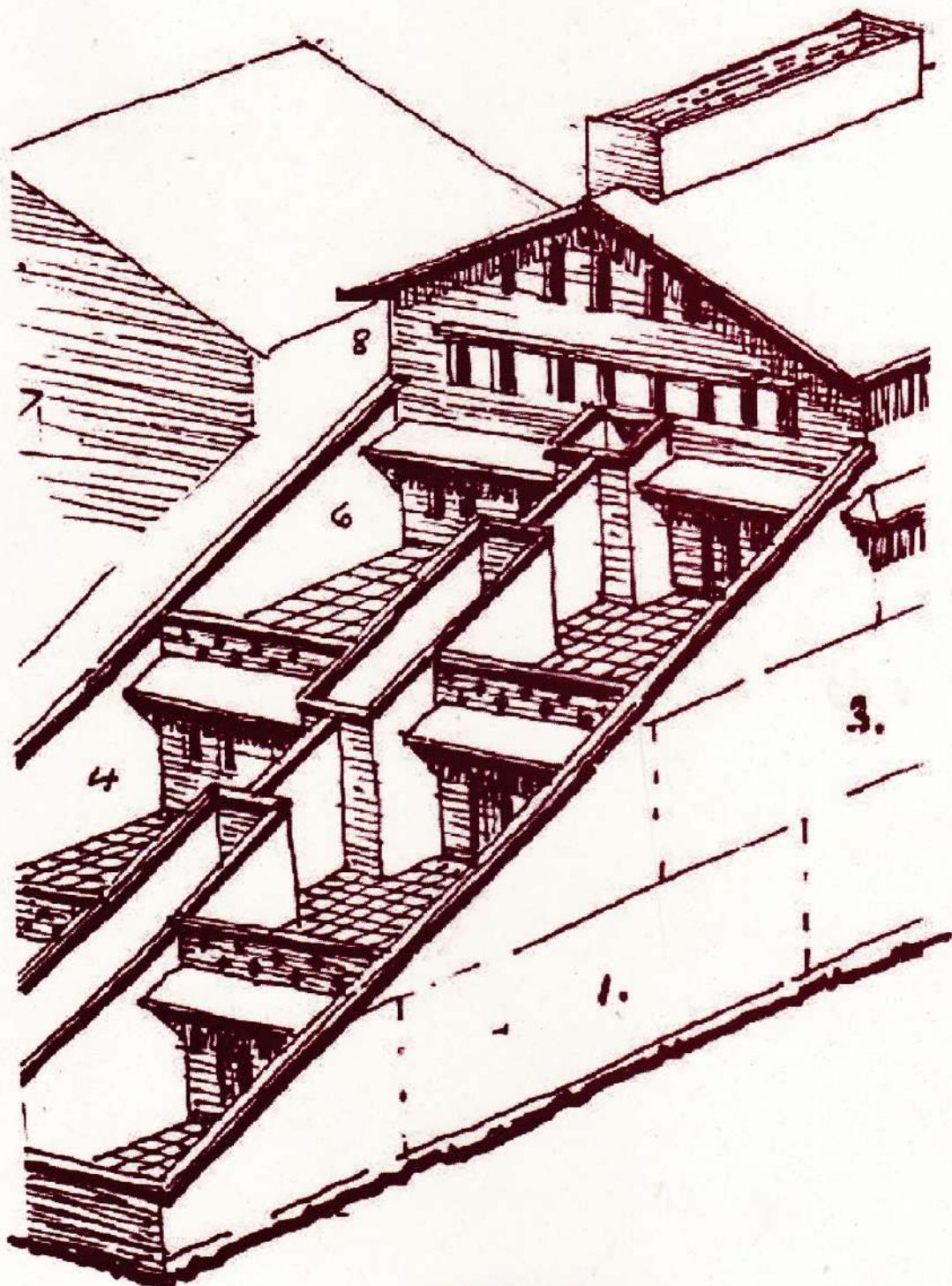
THE AUTHOR

Laurence Wilfred Baker was not just a well-known architect. He was also a cartoonist, a man who loved nature and above all, a humanist. He was a Gandhian in his thoughts and deeds. Born in 1917 he became an Associate of the Royal Institute of Architects in the United Kingdom after studying at the Birmingham School of Architecture. A chance meeting with Mahatma Gandhi inspired and introduced him into India in 1944. Following this he lived and worked in India helping his Kerala-born wife and medical doctor Elizabeth Baker and also practicing his architecture in meeting the housing and living requirements of the rural poor. It was in a remote village, Pithoragarh, in the Himalayan region where they built their home, hospital and school. In the mid-sixties the Bakers moved to Kerala and made it their home.



After moving to the city of Trivandrum in 1970, Baker built several buildings including numerous houses and institutions that were cost effective as well as environment-friendly. The late C. Achutha Menon, the visionary Chief Minister of Kerala during 1969-77 was an admirer and ardent supporter of Baker's philosophy and approach to building construction. So was the late K.N. Raj, one of India's outstanding economists. Baker was closely associated with several governmental and other public institutions to advise on matters relating to cost effective building technology. He also mentored a large number of young architects who came to work and live in Trivandrum. He authored several books imparting knowledge on housing and building construction. He also drew cartoons and was also a painter. He and his wife led a life of simplicity and service. Laurie Baker passed away on 1st April 2007.

There are two organizations that carry on his legacy. One is the Centre of Science and Technology for Rural Development known as COSTFORD headquartered in Thrissur with units in Trivandrum and other districts in Kerala. This was jointly founded by C. Achutha Menon, K.N. Raj and Laurie Baker himself in 1985. The other is the Laurie Baker Centre for Habitat Studies located in Trivandrum and founded in 2009 under the initiative of COSTFORD activists with financial support from the Government of Kerala to undertake training, research, publication and other activities relating to the building of a green habitat following the philosophy and approach of Laurie Baker.



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